

THE STORY OF KILDONAN
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
1851-1951

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The Story of Kildonan Presbyterian Church

1851 — 1951



COMMEMORATING THE COMING OF

DR. JOHN BLACK

AND

THE ORGANIZATION OF THE CONGREGATION

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KILDONAN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
First Presbyterian Church West of the Great Lakes.



REV. JOHN BLACK, D.D.
1851



REV. D. E. FLINT, B.A., S.T.B
1951

Preface

PRESBYTERIANS are justly proud of the fidelity shown by the Selkirk Settlers of the Presbyterian persuasion. They brought with them to the new land the doctrine and traditions of the Presbyterian Faith. We are indebted to them for a great spiritual heritage.

For some thirty-five years the light of Presbyterian beliefs was kept aglow by men and women who lived the doctrine they believed.

Their joy knew no bounds when at last, under the Providence of God, the Rev. John Black came to the Red River Settlement as their Minister.

The Community was indeed blessed in the man called to Minister to the Presbyterians of the Settlement. He did more than any other one person, to give leadership in solving the many difficulties and problems that concerned both the fur company and the settlers. To be able to retain the devotion of his people and the respect and confidence of the Company is the highest tribute to his ability and Christian Character.

The Congregation of Kildonan is very grateful to Miss Margaret McBeth. This history of the Church is entirely the work of her hand. Few realize the time and effort expended in the preparation and publication of this book. It has been truly a labor of Love.

Her efforts have been directed toward the one purpose: to produce a simple concise account of the formation of the Congregation and the founding of Kildonan Presbyterian Church.

If the reader is able to catch a glimpse of the Fidelity to Christ, and the Presbyterian branch of His Church, which has made great contributions to the West, the time and effort that have gone into the formation of this book have been well worth while.

D. E. FLINT

Acknowledgments

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We wish also to thank:

1. The Provincial Librarian, Mr. J. L. Johnston, and Miss Graham, Librarian of United Colleges, who so kindly placed all available material at our disposal.

2. The Hudson's Bay Company for their generous donation towards publication.

3. Our printers, The Wallingford Press Ltd.; and Rapid Grip & Batten, engravers, for their splendid co-operation.

M. E. M.

Story of Kildonan Presbyterian Church

"THERE had been a Kildonan Church in the old land long centuries before there was a Kildonan on Red River and the Presbyterian Church of this new land claims through its Highland Settlers, a noble heritage of Christian tradition more than a thousand years old."

—J. C. Walker.



*Kildonan Presbyterian Church
Helmsdale, Sutherlandshire
Scotland*

The hills and glens of Sutherlandshire, Scotland, were for centuries peopled by Gaelic speaking, Presbyterian folk of the Established Church of Scotland who lived on small holdings which had come down to them by inheritance through many long years.

The "Highland Clearances" which were carried out in the early 19th century with the utmost cruelty resulted in applications from over seven hundred people in response to Lord Selkirk's offer to bring settlers to the Hudson's Bay Company's territory in Canada.

Four promises were made to them before they left Scotland. These related to religion, land, marketing and "all the privileges of British subjects," but of these the one that entered most deeply into their lives was the unfulfilled promise that "they were to enjoy the services of a minister of religion, who was to be of their own persuasion."

Space will not permit a description of the four long voyages, 1811-15, by sail-boat from the North of Scotland to Hudson Bay and on to Red River, nor can we dwell on the sufferings caused by plagues of grasshoppers, floods,

the rivalry of the two fur companies, and the efforts of the North West Company to break up the colony.

It is sufficient at this time to say that when Lord Selkirk arrived in the Colony in September, 1817, he was met with the question of the church of their choice. A meeting was called on the property belonging to Alexander McBeath and his son John. This is now St. John's Park and the present site of St. John's Cathedral and College building. The meeting was on the northern lot belonging to John. When the settlers reminded the Earl that they had not been supplied with a minister of their own faith he spoke to them somewhat as follows: "I see you have already started a cemetery on the lot on which we stand and I will give you this lot for a church and the lot across the ravine, adjoining on the South for school purposes, if the owners are willing to give them up and select other lots to their satisfaction at any place available in the settlement." The owners agreed to this and obtained land North of the present site of Kildonan Church." (From memoirs of Ross Sutherland.)

"At the close of its proceedings he named the parish 'Kildonan'. The settlers then busied themselves in erecting a temporary building to serve the double purpose of prayer meeting and school house, until the minister should arrive and a regular church be built."—Alexander Ross in "The Red River Settlement."

The anxiety which prevailed in Lord Selkirk's affairs in the East, followed by his illness and death in France in 1820, came as a great blow to the Presbyterian cause at Red River. No good purpose can be served in trying to place the blame, but one can imagine the disappointment of the Scottish settlers when a clergyman of the Anglican Church came to minister to them.

The Rev. John West arrived in October, 1820. He was sent out by the Missionary Society of London, to serve as Chaplain to the Hudson's Bay Company, to minister to the Colony, and to extend the work among the Indians. He was followed in 1823 by Rev. David Jones, and later by Rev. Wm. Cochrane.

The Rev. David Jones, who ministered for fourteen years and was loved by the people, summed up the situation honestly when he wrote: "These people brought their religion to the country along with them and are conscientiously wedded to the rites and discipline of the Presbyterian form of worship and nothing will make them forsake the Church of their forefathers."

A very interesting letter, dated February 18th, 1852, followed the separation of the Presbyterian and Anglican bodies. It was addressed to the Rev. Jas. Hunter and referred also to the work of the Rev. Mr. Cowley in their missions at Fairford and The Pas. A gift of twenty cwt. of grain from the Presbyterians of the Colony was given to each mission.

"Our offering, humble and scanty as other claims have rendered it, will at least show that we acknowledge, if we cannot discharge, the debt which we owe to the Church Missionary Society. . . . Though, after a struggle of more than thirty years, and at an expense which attests our sincerity, we have at last established in this wilderness the faith of our fathers, yet we embrace this the first opportunity of evincing that Christian charity which, amid the manifold divisions of the Christian church, can still knit together honest differences of opinion with a bond of mutual goodwill."

This honest difference of opinion enabled these two churches to settle

many questions with "mutual goodwill" and undisturbed friendships and to continue their work side by side in a field which was large enough for all.



ALEXANDER ROSS

For almost forty years the Selkirk Settlers had never faltered in their aim of establishing their own church and in this connection special tribute must be paid to their great leader, the scholarly Alexander Ross. He was not a Selkirk Settler by birth, but one with them in their devotion to the church of their forefathers.

Alexander Ross pays tribute to James Sutherland, who arrived in the settlement with Governor Semple's party in 1815, and who was licensed before leaving Scotland to perform certain offices of the Presbyterian Church. He was forcibly carried away by the North West Company in 1818.

"Of all men, clergymen or others, that ever entered this country, none stood higher in the estimation of the settlers, both for sterling piety and Christian conduct, than Mr. Sutherland. By his arrival with the Scottish emigrants in Hudson Bay the gospel was planted in Red River. It was the sunrise of Christianity in this benighted country."—A. Ross.

In 1846 the settlers appealed to the Colonial Committee of the Free Church in Scotland and Dr. Bonar, who was convener of the Committee, handed the matter over to the Free Church in Canada. The work of obtaining a suitable missionary was in the hands of Dr. Robert Burns, of Knox College, Toronto, and to his wisdom of choice and persistence in carrying out his plan, the settlers were indebted when, in 1851, the great missionary, John Black, arrived.

Rev. John Black

John Black was born in the parish of Eskdale Muir on the Scottish border, January 8th, 1818. His father was a shepherd farmer. John received a thorough education in the parish school and from his minister, Rev. George Hastie, a greater desire to qualify for the ministry.

Financial difficulties changed his plans for a time and he became engaged in teaching. When he was twenty-three, the family moved to America and settled at Bovina in the State of New York (1841). Three years later (1844) he entered Knox College, Toronto, one of fourteen students in the first class in theology. He graduated with honors and because of his proficiency in the French language he was asked to take up mission work among the French Canadians.

Three years later the urgent appeal came from Red River and he was influenced by his old friend and professor, Dr. Robert Burns, to go under the foreign mission board to meet this great need.

On July 31st, 1851, he wrote to his brother: "I am to be ordained tonight and go on to-morrow at 7.30 A.M. This is a very important mission but I leave one important also."

And so the name of Rev. John Black was placed second on the foreign missionary roll of the Presbyterian Churches in Canada, next to that of John Geddie, who went to the New Hebrides in 1846.

On August 1st he started on the long journey by way of Detroit, Chicago and St. Paul. From there he travelled North to Pembina with Alexander Ramsey, Governor of Minnesota. Leaving the party at this point he continued in company with J. W. Bond in a birch-bark canoe, down the Red River, arriving at Colony Gardens, the home of Alexander Ross, on Friday evening, September 19th.

It was fitting that he should be received on his arrival by this great leader of the Presbyterian cause, and that they should have the joy of discussing the future of the work in the West.

It was also a great satisfaction to all when Rev. Mr. Black brought to Kildonan Manse some time later his gracious wife, Henrietta, a daughter of Sheriff Ross.

As only one day remained before the Sabbath, it was impossible to arrange for a service on the 21st, and Mr. Black attended the Anglican service on that day. During the following week the good news spread and three hundred settlers met in and around the partially finished manse to welcome their new minister.

It is this great day that we are commemorating now—one hundred years since the first service conducted by an ordained Presbyterian minister was held West of the Great Lakes.

Text of the first sermon:

"Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ."

—Ephesians III, V. 8.

This was the first message brought by the great "Apostle of the Red River," as he faced that large congregation of men and women whose greatest longing had at last been realized.

Three years later, January 5th, 1854, Dr. Black stood in the pulpit of his new church and preached from the text:

"The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of Hosts, and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of Hosts."

—HAGGAI II, V. 9.

"How we remember the spiritual power of the man—the intense fervor of his pulpit ministrations—the fire that made his voice ring through the old stone church with appeals on behalf of Christ." Such was the opinion of one who had heard him often. Such was his preaching and never ceased to be through his long ministry of thirty-two years.

"With the arrival of Mr. Black the more or less formal history of the Presbyterian Church in Western Canada may be said to begin. Yet, great as was his work as the pioneer Presbyterian minister of the West, it must be said that he built upon the foundations laid by those loyal Scottish settlers who had kept the flame aglow during the long years of hardship, disappointment and neglect, before their minister arrived. Worthy are they of the ancient Presbyterian device and motto; the Burning Bush and the words:

"Nec Tamen Consumebatur."

One thing and one alone, preserved the Presbyterian faith in the West, and that was family religion and worship."—Dr. J. Walker.

Organization

No time was lost in completing the organization of the congregation.

On November 26th, the elders were elected; on December 7th, they were ordained. On the same Sunday the first baptism was solemnized, the recipient being the child of Richard Salter, the only Englishman in the community.

On November 27th, the Council of Assiniboia declared all registration of marriages, baptisms and burials kept regularly by an ordained Presbyterian minister, to be legal. The baptismal records have proved to be very useful in connection with old age pensions and insurance, as they covered almost a quarter of a century before the Province of Manitoba came into being. On December 14th the first Presbyterian communion West of the Great Lakes was observed. It was indeed a memorable day. A Preparatory Service was held on Saturday and tokens were given to forty-five communicants. Many hesitated to partake of this sacred feast, feeling their unworthiness.

The Sunday morning service was unique. It was the first Presbyterian communion in the Canadian West, also the first time that Mr. Black had dispensed a communion; the first time that any of the elders had served; and the first time that many of the communicants had partaken of the Lord's Supper.

Building a Church

No sooner were the Settlers assured of a minister than preparations for his arrival had begun. The manse was the first step and served as residence and place of meeting until the church was built.

Property claims with the Anglican Church were settled by a transfer of the site for the new church from St. Johns to Frog Plain, where Kildonan Church now stands. This included three hundred acres of land and right of way of thirty-six feet from the main road to the river, (now John Black Avenue); £150 sterling was given by the Hudson's Bay Company towards the building of the church, "in full of all claims and demands."

The question of cemetery rites was difficult to settle as the Presbyterians laid claim to right of burial in the "Upper Churchyard," where a number of their dear ones had been buried. Their claim was upheld by Governor Colville and the consecration of the cemetery at St. Johns was delayed for many years.

Early in 1851 a meeting was held and it was resolved "that a manse 35 ft. by 20 ft. should be erected and finished without delay and that a stone church, 60 ft. by 32 ft. should be built as soon as possible."

The manse was hurried to completion for the opening service on September 28th, 1851, and occupied the position of the present residence.

Timbers were prepared and stone hauled from Stony Mountain, fourteen miles across the prairie, for the church; but the devastating flood of 1852 carried away the timbers and delayed the work so that the building was not ready for use until January 5th, 1854.

At a meeting on June 25th, 1851, it was agreed that building should begin when £500 sterling was subscribed. At the time of completion the cost was £1,050, and the church was opened free of debt. This amount would seem small in figures of today but it represented much sacrifice at that time. Volunteer work and contributions from every family made it indeed a labor of love.

"There keep pouter and ill hauns off her and she'll staun for a hunner

year un' mair," said the old mason, Duncan McRae, who superintended the construction. The church with its massive stone walls and solid foundations, four feet wide and four feet deep, has abundantly stood the test.

The church was plain and neat, a replica of the little church in Helmsdale, which was still a fond memory. The pulpit was high against the front wall. No platform was needed for choir or organ as the music was in the care of the precentor, John Fraser, who lined the psalms and with the help of a tuning fork, raised the tune. He received £3 a year for his services. The question of an organ and hymns came up several times during the John Black period but was sternly put aside. Even after the General Assembly of 1872 favored such innovations, the session of the "Auld Kirk" in Kildonan placed on record the following: "This session does not see its way clearly as to the expediency and lawfulness of instrumental music but does not wish to stand in the way of those whose minds and conscience may be clear on this matter."

The minister's vestry was the little room under the stairway leading to the gallery and no partition crossed the church to form a vestibule. The pews on the West side went to the doorway.

The church contained seventy pews. Six, square with doors and tables, occupied the right and left front; twenty long pews and forty-four short completed the seating. Pews were sold and certificates issued to owners who could not transfer them to anyone but "a member of the said church who would agree to the Constitution." Square pew No. 1 belonged to the Hudson's Bay Company. Pews were drawn by lot, each family agreeing to pay £2 10s to the minister's stipend and a small sum of three shillings for support of Precentor and Beadle, and heating of building. Alexander Bannerman, the first Beadle, received £5 a year.

It is interesting to note that preference for front pews existed at that time and that in fairness to all a small reduction was made for those whose pews were in the rear.

Laying of the Corner Stone

On July 11th, 1852, the service in connection with the laying of the corner stone took place. The ceremony was performed by Recorder Adam Thom. This stone, laid on the South-West corner, contains a bottle hermetically sealed with the following notices:

Minister: Rev. John Black.

Elders: Alex. Ross, Alex. Polson, James Fraser, George Munroe, John Sutherland, Donald Matheson.

Trustees: Alex. Ross, John Fraser, John Sutherland, Alex. Sutherland, John Matheson, Angus Polson, Angus Matheson, John Sutherland, Jr.

Mason: Duncan McRae.



Kildonan Church at time of opening.

Major Caldwell, Governor of Red River Colony.

Eden Colville, Governor-in-Chief of Rupertsland.

Population of Red River Colony, 5,391.

Money in circulation, £5,000.

1852, the year of the second high water.

Coins enclosed: Shilling, Sixpence in silver, and copper farthing.

Red River, a colony of Hudson's Bay Company, subject to the British Crown

Rev. John Bonar, of Glasgow, Convener of the Free Church of Scotland.

Rev. Robert Burns, Convener of the Free Church of Canada.

Copy of the Free Church Record.

No newspapers printed in the Colony.

Victoria I, Queen of England.

Also the record of the struggle to get the Church established, prepared by
Alexander Ross.

Expansion

From the beginning the church was a missionary centre. Rev. Mr. Black came as a foreign missionary to a field that seemed limitless. In 1853 services were started at Little Britain and for almost ten years Dr. Black carried on alone, preaching alternately at Little Britain and Kildonan, and holding prayer meetings from home to home in different parts of his large field.

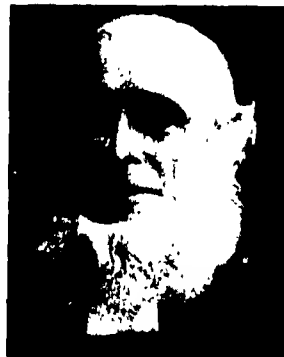


REV. JAMES NISBET

In 1862 Rev. James Nisbet, also appointed as a foreign missionary, was sent to Red River to assist Dr. Black and to carry the gospel to the Indians. Preaching centres were started at Fort Garry and Headingly. Fort Garry was the seed from which Knox Church sprang. The first Knox Church was built on the south-west corner of Portage and Fort, in 1868. Mr. Nisbet also raised funds and superintended the building of a new school, which was opened in 1864. Schools at that time were the work of the church, and the new stone building, now Nisbet Hall, took the place of the old log school of 1849.

In 1866, Mr. Nisbet with his wife and their party were sent to the Indian Mission work of the West. Kildonan friends met to pray for the work and to give them financial aid for the mission. They reached their destination after six weeks journey in covered carts and founded, not only a mission but also the city of Prince Albert. Dr. and Mrs. Nisbet may be numbered among those who laid down their lives for the cause of Christ. They returned to find a resting place in the Old Kildonan Churchyard.

In 1866 Alexander Matheson was appointed to assist Dr. Black. He was a native son of Kildonan, educated in the Anglican school of St. John's, and a teacher in the first Presbyterian school in Kildonan. He was influenced by Dr. Black to take theology in Knox College; was licensed for the ministry in 1860, and appointed successor to James Nisbet in 1866. He took over the work at Little Britain in the morning and preached at Kildonan in the afternoon, while Dr. Black supplied at Fort Garry.



REV. ALEXANDER
MATHESON

His work in a parish which extended from Selkirk to Portage la Prairie was very far-reaching and the years of his retirement in the old home in East Kildonan were years of usefulness to Kildonan Church and Sunday Schools.

It would be impossible in this little book to do justice to the work of Dr. Black and the early church. He came to Kildonan a young man, 33 years of age. He labored without Presbytery or Synod—a lone sentinel—for twenty-one years. Questions requiring consent had to be forwarded to Toronto, a matter of time. Even his induction into the church that he had served so long came at the end of twenty-one years—October 1st, 1872—because there was no Presbytery to conduct such a service. Queen's University honored him in 1876 with the degree of Doctor of Divinity. In 1881 his health showed signs of strain and he was ordered to rest. He went back to the family home in Bovina and there recovered sufficiently to attend the General Assmbly at Kingston. The church wished to honor him as Moderator of that year's Assembly but he knew that he could not accept the responsibility. He returned to Red River and was warmly welcomed home.

"On the 11th of February, 1882, the call to lay down the burden came to him. Today they sleep together in the quiet old churchyard of Kildonan, by the banks of the tawny river which they loved—minister and people who gathered round that first Communion table—for all have passed to their reward.

"Today the great plains are filled with people, the hum of busy life and industry has sprung up where the lonely fort stood and the lone minister preached. The minister has gone, his sacred dust lies quietly in the old churchyard, a granite tombstone bears his name and his story, but more enduring than these is his work which goes on, and will go on forever."—T. Laidlaw, Manitoba College Jubilee, 1921.



Education

Education, secular and religious, was an important factor in the early days of Red River. The three pioneer groups — Roman Catholic, Anglican and Presbyterian — provided educational opportunities in their Church Schools and finally founded the University of Manitoba in 1877, by establishing a uniform examining board.

From the time of his arrival in 1851 Dr. Black tutored promising students in the classics. He encouraged them to continue their studies in Toronto. Classes were held in the home of a nearby pioneer, Donald Murray, and after the building of the stone school in 1864 (now Nisbet Hall) were more fully organized. Continued effort resulted in the establishment of the first College building in 1872. Dr. George Bryce and Dr. Thomas Hart were appointed by the General Assembly in connection with the College and Dr. Black continued in his chosen field of the Classics. The rapid growth of population at the Forks made it advisable to move the College, in 1875, much to the disappointment of the Kildonan settlers and their minister.



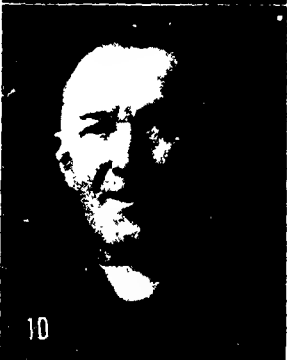
Home of Hon. Donald Murray, where some of the first Manitoba College classes were held.



*Nisbet Hall
Built 1864. Early College and elementary classes met here.*



1872—First Manitoba College building on lot south of Nisbet Hall.



MINISTERS WHO SERVED IN KILDONAN PARISH

1. Dr. John Black	1851 - 1882
2. Dr. John Pringle	1882 - 1886
3. Rev. W. H. Spence	1886 - 1889
4. Rev. C. D. McDonald	1890 - 1892
5. Rev. Wm. McKinley	1892 - 1896
6. Rev. J. H. Cameron	1897 - 1908
7. Rev. Hugh Hamilton	1908 - 1918
8. Rev. D. D. Millar	1918 - 1925
9. Rev. W. J. Forbes-Robertson	1926 - 1927
10. Rev. John Hart	1928 - 1932
11. Rev. P. Ferguson MacSween	1936 - 1948
12. Rev. Donald E. Flint	1948 - Present

Men who entered the ministry of the Presbyterian Church in Canada from Kildonan:

Rev. Alexander Matheson,
 Rev. Samuel Polson,
 Rev. Samuel (Duncan) Polson,
 Dr. R. G. MacBeth,
 Rev. David Anderson,
 Rev. George Gunn (Little Britain),
 Rev. Ian P. MacSween,
 Rev. Alex. F. MacSween.

Space will not permit us to do justice to the faithful followers of the generation who organized the first congregation. Many changes have taken place in a century. At that time a solid block of Sutherlandshire people, with their little homesteads, lined both sides of the Red River. In the summer the bell in the "new" church steeple called the "East Siders" to meet at the ferry fifteen minutes before the service on Sunday morning, and also in the afternoon. In winter the sound of sleigh bells along the river proclaimed the approach of whole families, and so the East and West met to worship together: "for the people had a mind to work," and to worship, and the church was a mighty power in their lives.

With the passing years the church has lost many of its old associates but has had the joy of welcoming many families who have thrown in their lot with us in our church life and have helped to carry the Torch down the long road to the present.

The little mother church stands proudly today in the midst of a district which is becoming thickly populated. People from all parts of the world and with varied religious loyalties live within its shadow. It is the desire of our minister and our members to serve today as faithfully as our church of old served.

Our Honor Roll

The Church is proud of the men and women who served in the two Great Wars. The two Honor Rolls on our walls bear their names. We think with sorrow of those who did not come back.

"They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old"

*"O valiant hearts, who to your glory came
Through dust of conflict and through battle flame;
Tranquil you lie your knightly virtue proved,
Your memory hallowed in the land you loved."*

Tributes

We should like to pay tribute to:

- (1) The ministers who have served God in this church through the century. Three of these are active today in the Christian ministry: Rev. John Hart, B.D., of Port Elgin, Ont.; Rev. P. F. MacSween, of Glamis, Ontario; and our present minister, Rev. D. E. Flint.
- (2) The memory of many who served on the Session through the century and to those who are active now in this important duty.
- (3) The members of the Trustee Board, the Board of Managers, and all engaged in the task of finance.
- (4) Faithful men and women who have carried on the work of the Sunday School, endeavoring always to serve, not only those of the Presbyterian faith, but the whole community.
- (5) The Women's Missionary Society and its workers. The Home Missionary Society came into being in 1891; the Foreign Society in 1907; and the two amalgamated in 1914. This group has carried on faithfully and taken a large part in fulfilling our Lord's Great Commission: "Go ye into all the world."
- (6) The Ladies' Aid Society, organized with Mrs. Dr. Black as its first President. This group has proved an unfailing source of financial support through the years, and has also carried on a labor of love in the care of the sick and bereaved.
- (7) The young people who have done their part in various groups: Girls' Sunbeam Club; the Choir; Y. P. S.; Boys' Clubs.
- (8) Members and adherents who, while not connected with the organizations mentioned, have been loyal in their attendance and support of God's work.

Old Kildonan

By JOHN MACKAY, D.D.

*Have you been to old Kildonan;
Seen the Red, with gentle sweep,
Guard the little, rude God's Acre
Where the Selkirk settlers sleep?*

*Have you seen it in the moonlight,
Snow-enshrouded, still and white,
As a myriad stars shone softly
Through the lucent winter night,*

*While the church was limned in shadow
On the overmantling snow,
Where the headstones stood like sentries
O'er its builders, row on row?*

*Have you read the simple stories
On those headstones, old and grey,
Telling of a deep heart-hunger
For a dear land far away,*

*Where the homes, they left forever.
Stand beside the Northern Sea.
And the old church lifts its steeple
Over heather—hill and lea?*

*Now behind them roll the waters,
Broad Atlantic tempest-tossed.
Stormy wastes of ice-bound Hudson
By their little vessels crossed,*

*Ere they paddled up the river
To this long desired spot,
Where they lifted up their voices
In the psalms their mothers taught.*

*Praising Him they learned to worship
Round the altar-hearth of home,
Where were lit those faith-fed fires,
Burning bright where'er they roam;*

*Till, their earthly journey ended,
They have found eternal rest,
And each toil-worn body slumbers
Safe on Old Kildonan's breast.*

*Have you laid in Old Kildonan
One, whose heart, forever stilled.
Joined in yours with love unmeasured,
All your world with gladness filled?*

*Have you seen Kildonan answer
To the miracle of spring;
Deck its tombs with flowers and green-
ness
While the birds their carols sing?*

*Has your sad heart learned the meaning
Breathed by spring in every breath,
"Though these dear forms slowly
moulder,
Life is victor over death"?*

*Then you too may share the glory
Of that epic, great and true.
How those pioneers of Empire
Broke the Western trail for you.*

*Laid, in faith, the broad foundations
Of this land, so free and wide
That it offers homes and plenty
To a boundless human tide:*

*You may tread, with pride and wonder,
O'er this ever-sacred sod,
Where a little band of Crofters
Claimed the great, new West for God.*

Looking Forward

THE story of the past hundred years makes us proud of our traditions, but our obligations and hopes are in the future.

"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses," *let us press forward*, "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith."

The Past

"Thy will was in the builders' thought;
Thy hands unseen amidst them wrought,
Through mortal motive, scheme and plan,
Thy wise eternal purpose ran.

No lack Thy perfect fullness knew;
For human needs and longings grew
This house of prayer, this home of rest.
In the fair garden of the West."

J. L. WHITTIER.

The Future

"O God of Bethel! by whose hand
Thy people still are fed;
Who through this weary pilgrimage
Hast all our fathers led:

Our vows, our prayers, we now present
Before Thy throne of grace;
God of our fathers! be the God
Of their succeeding race.

Through each perplexing path of life
Our wandering footsteps guide;
Give us each day our daily bread,
And raiment fit provide.

O spread Thy covering wings around.
Till all our wanderings cease,
And at our Father's loved abode
Our souls arrive in peace.

Such blessings from Thy gracious hand
Our humble prayers implore;
And Thou shalt be our chosen God,
And portion evermore."